

KROUSE, LEWIS N.

INTERVIEW

#12045

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Lula Austin, Investigator.  
Indian-Pioneer history  
November 2, 1937

Interview with Lewis N. Krouse,  
Mead, Oklahoma.

Lewis N. Krouse was born April 18, 1878, near Woodville, Oklahoma.

Mr. Krouse's father was born in Germany; his mother, Frances Newberry, a full blood Chickasaw, was born in the Indian Territory.

Back in 1890, there was a place called Double Springs where the people who lived within fifteen miles radius came for a two or three weeks' protracted meeting each year for a number of years. The meeting was held under brush arbors as they did not have a house in which to meet.

They brought tents and camped on the grounds near two large springs in which were placed two hollow logs about four feet in length. These springs were known far and near as "Louble Springs," and they afforded plenty of water for all purposes during the driest seasons.

Later a small church building was built. The Baptist and Presbyterian denominations predominated at

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that time.

After a few years the Chickasaw Nation established a neighborhood school for Indian boys and girls with one teacher. The church building was used as a school building but in the course of a few years this building was destroyed by fire and then a large church building was erected.

At this time the Indian Government also built a school building which was known as Double Spring School.

About the year 1897, a post office was established. The office was served out of Durant by the Star Mail Route. The post office was called Mead after its first postmaster, C. W. Meades. He also built the first store in Mead and soon there were two more grocery stores and a drug store added and then, as a necessary adjunct, a blacksmith shop was set up.

In the year 1900, a cotton gin and a small mill were installed and then, after a year or two, there was another larger gin and sawmill and grist mill added.

In 1903, the post office was moved to the railroad station, a mile north of the old town.

A new townsite had been surveyed and laid out by

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the United States Government and the new railroad was known as the Arkansas and Choctaw and is now owned by the Frisco railroad.

From this time on, the town of Mead began to be built in earnest and the population reached about five hundred, and two large cotton gins were built, a hotel, ice docks, restaurants, and then a bank was put in in a small frame building with Blackburn and McGinnes of Denison, Texas, owning controlling interests in the institution. As time moved on there were seven brick store houses erected, including a new bank building. Everything moved along in a big way until the year 1920, when a decline began. Dwelling houses were torn down, store buildings were vacated and torn down and moved away and about the year 1924, the bank was liquidated and moved to Durant.

All the buildings in Mead are gone now except one large brick building and a concrete one in which the post office is located, one frame building in which there is a barber shop and a small drug store. There is one telephone here in a private residence.

The population of Mead has dwindled to about one

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hundred.

Mead is near the Washita River and there are some small streams close by. The country surrounding it is prairie and wooded lands. The elevation here is about seven hundred feet above the sea level.

In the early days the best known citizens who lived in and around the little village were as follows: The Abcock family, Levi Kemp, W. D. Keirse, Christian Krouse, E. Q. Franklin, Rube Beal, Lewis Henderson, R. A. Steton, W. R. Davis, J. M. Davis, Geo. Farris, Martin Newberry, Joe Underwood, E. D. Love, G. A. Yarborough and John Yarborough.

There are others but these are the oldest residents who were most influential in the settlement.

There are no clubs or organization of any kind here now, though at one time there were the Odd Fellows, Woodmen of the World and Woodmen Circle, Farmers' Union and a Republican Club.

This place used to market about three thousand bales of cotton in a year and eight or ten carloads of corn and from six to eight carloads of cottonwood blocks.

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Nothing of importance is being marketed now as it is so near Durant and the highway, and all products go to the larger towns.

The only thing which reminds us of the past is a large oak tree. It is said that some two or three horse thieves have paid the penalty of death by swinging from its limbs.